

**AGENDA ITEM IV – A**

**YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2022**

**I. Call to Order & Roll Call (4:00 P.M.)**

Present: Blaser, Buttacavoli, Hudson (Chair), Kirchner (Vice-Chair), and Shaw  
Absent: Bains, Fuhrer, Micheli

**II. Public Business from the Floor**

None.

**III. Consent Calendar**

Director Kirchner made a motion to approve the consent calendar. Director Shaw seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**IV. Reports**

**A. Next Generation Transit Facility project Funding and Schedule Update.**

Martin stated that due to the Highway 70 (B Street) project, we originally expected to be displaced from our current facility property by 2025, but recent discussions with Caltrans revealed that they are looking for alternatives to keep us on the site by building a retaining wall on the property line. At this time, we are not sure if and when this will happen, but we would still be significantly impacted for months at a time due to major portions of the bus parking lot along with access around the building being restricted for temporary construction easements which might include help from Caltrans with some early work on our new Avondale property that could benefit the ultimate project. As a result, we are probably not going to be forced off our property in 2025, but Caltrans talking that construction of the retaining wall starting as early as 2023. Martin continued that even if not required to be off the property by 2025, the new facility project is still necessary for the future state-mandated zero-emission bus fleet, and we have already secured significant funding that will expire at some point, so we need to push the project forward to avoid any of that money being lost.

On the funding side, Martin noted that we have secured \$26 million in funding of the estimated \$47.5 million cost of the new facility. We have identified another \$8 million in reasonably available funding including the sale of our current facility. Assuming these funds materialize as planned, we are looking at a current project shortfall of \$12.5 million (27 percent). Significant possible funding sources to bridge this gap include the next round of the federal Buses & Bus Facilities Grant program (Spring 2023) and the state Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (Spring 2024) may bridge this gap.

Regarding project design and engineering, our planning consultant WSP did a conceptual design and cost estimate which we still have in place. This design was based on the 2019 level of service which is now being re-evaluated as part of the NextGen Transit Plan. As a result, we do not want to design the new facility until we know the intended fleet size, mix of vehicles, and the services that we are going to operate. That information will be better defined when the transit plan is adopted in the spring of 2023. With Yuba County approval, we believe that we can still move forward with the environmental assessment based on the WSP

design concept. If we can get the environmental process cleared, we will have an advantage when applying for additional funding so, with Board approval, we would like to start the environmental process at the beginning of the year.

Director Kirchner asked if the retaining wall will be in front or back of the facility and if will they be moving the railroad tracks. Martin responded that the retaining wall would be on the back property line as they will be moving the tracks closer to the facility to put new railroad overpasses of Highway 70 both north and south of our property.

Director Hudson asked if Caltrans will help with funding if we need to temporarily move to a new property. Martin stated that we will be talking with Caltrans about this issue as the temporary construction easements will affect about two-thirds of our bus parking spaces.

Director Blaser wants to know if we have done anything on the new property. Martin stated that we have only removed vegetation to improve site visibility and conducted routine fire suppression work. Director Blaser asked if we have put up fencing. Martin responded that we have not installed any fencing.

Martin continued by stating that the City of Marysville has talked to us about putting the existing facility site on their list of potentially available properties, but that he wanted Board input before doing so. He also noted that he has had an informal conversation with another entity that has expressed interest in the property.

Director Buttacavoli stated that in a meeting with Caltrans regarding the current property, it was discussed that B Street is going to be lowered by four to six feet at the entrance to our property so the City of Marysville emphasized that future bus ingress and egress must be protected.

Director Hudson recommended that staff proceed with the environmental study but hold off on the process of making the property available for sale as we do not yet know the ultimate impact of the highway project. It was the consensus direction of the Board to support this recommendation.

**B. Draft Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) Blue Sky Grant Application for FY 2022/2023.**

Martin stated that the Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) is now accepting proposals for the current round of Blue Sky Grants. Approximately \$100,000 is available this year which is down from \$125,000 last year and significantly less than the \$250,000 that had previously been allocated. Yuba-Sutter Transit has long submitted grant applications to use these funds for the very successful Discount Monthly Pass Program for youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities. Under this program, regular \$15 discount monthly passes are sold for just \$5 using FRAQMD funds to cover the \$10 in lost fare on each pass. Based on current ridership and discount pass sales allowing for continued growth in the future, staff is currently projecting the sale of 9,600 passes over the 12-month period of April 2023 through March 2024 for a proposed grant request of \$96,000.

Director Shaw made a motion to authorize submittal of a FRAQMD grant application for continuation of the Discount Monthly Bus Pass Program for area youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities as proposed. Director Kirchner seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**C. Project & Program Updates.**

- 1. NextGen Transit Plan (Online Community Survey Now Underway / Community Open House & Board Workshop Set for Thursday October 20th)**

Martin noted that the Next Gen Transit Plan is a top-to-bottom review of our current system in response to the long-term negative ridership trend that began in FY 2016 and continued through the pandemic fueled collapse of 2020 and 2021. While we have experienced some recovery with FY 2022 ridership is up nearly 30 percent over FY 2021, systemwide ridership is still just 50 percent of the pre-pandemic FY 2019 level and only 35 percent of the historic high of 1.3 million passenger boardings in FY 2015.

The purpose of the Next Gen Transit Plan is to reimagine our system over the next five to ten years to best meet the needs of our passengers and the communities we serve within realistic financial constraints. In addition to expected changes in the size, scope and mode of the operation, the plan will also consider the large-scale introduction of state-mandated zero-emission buses and the related development of our new operating facility in Linda.

Much of the work to date has been data collection and processing to assess the state of the current system and where and when people now travel within the Yuba-Sutter area and beyond. To help inform the service alternatives phase of the project, an online customer and community survey has been launched to receive input on what works and what, if improved and expanded, could better connect our community. The availability of the survey is being promoted widely through a variety of platforms, but we are looking for assistance from our member jurisdictions to promote the survey through their networks (website, social media, etc.). The survey will be open at least through October.

The extensive and continuous public outreach process for this project includes two public open houses that have been scheduled for Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, which is a board meeting date. The first will be from 2:00 – 4:00 pm in these chambers (just prior to the board meeting) and the second will be in the same location that evening from 5:30 – 7:00 pm. During the board meeting at 4:00 pm that afternoon, the project consultant will provide a mid-project report which will include some of the key early findings.

Draft recommendations are expected in early 2023 with Board consideration of the final plan scheduled for April or May so early plan recommendations can be included in the FY 2024 budget.

## **2. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Triennial Review Close-Out**

Martin stated that while we have yet to receive the official close-out letter, staff expects to get it any day as the required responses to the 2022 Triennial Review have been submitted for FTA review and approval. There were just two deficiency findings this year over the four-year period covered by the review. Much thanks to our staff and our contractor Storer Transit Systems for their hard work both during and prior to the review to keep us in compliance with our federal funding requirements.

## **3. Regional Waste Management Authority (RWMA) Staff Transition**

The RWMA Board of Directors will be interviewing an Executive Director candidate as part of their meeting this afternoon. Assuming a positive outcome, a new Executive Director could be on board in November.

## **4. FY 2022 Fiscal Audit (Virtual Field Work September 19 - 23)**

Martin noted that field work for the annual fiscal audit will be conducted all next week.

## **5. Annual Sacramento Area Council of Government (SACOG) Unmet Transit Needs Hearings: In Person – Yuba County Government Center, 1:00pm, Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup> Virtual – 6:00pm, Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>**

Martin announced that as part of their responsibilities under the state Transportation Development Act, SACOG holds a series of public hearings each year to determine if there are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet. These hearings have been virtual since 2019, but an in-person hearing will be held this year for all of Yuba and Sutter Counties and the cities therein. This hearing will be held in the Yuba County Government Center at 1:00 pm on Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. To provide options, SACOG will be holding one virtual evening hearing for all of Yuba, Sutter, Sacramento, and Yolo Counties at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>. Publicity for these hearings will begin shortly.

**V. Correspondence/Information**

None

**VI. Other Business**

None

**VII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

**THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022 AT 4:00 PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTICED.**